

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 /060 W

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R 061514Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5337

INFO SECDEF

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 15348

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MPOL, UK

SUBJ: LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE: DEFENSE RESOLUTION

REF: LONDON 14337

SUMMARY. LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE OCTOBER 3 PASSED RESOLUTION ON DEFENSE SPENDING WHICH CALLED UPON GOVERNMENT TO REDUCE EXPENDITURE LEVEL IMMEDIATELY. RESOLUTION WAS ENDORSED BY NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC). CONFERENCE ALSO REJECTED RADICAL DEFENSE RESOLUTION, PURSUANT TO NEC RECOMMENDATION. AS APPROVED RESOLUTION IS NOT BINDING ON GOVERNMENT, IT CAN EASILY BE IGNORED, AS  
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EXPECTED TO OCCUR WITH SEVERAL OTHER RESOLUTIONS ON

DOMESTIC POLICY. ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS, HOWEVER, MAY  
FORCE HMG EVENTUALLY TO REDUCE ITS DEFENSE EXPENDITURES.  
END SUMMARY.

1. PARTY CONFERENCE OCTOBER 3 DEBATED TWO COMPOSITE  
RESOLUTIONS WHICH URGED IMMEDIATE CUTS IN DEFENSE BUDGET.  
FIRST RESOLUTION, WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY XTREME LEFT AND  
UNILATERAL DISARMERS, CONDEMNED HMG DEFENSE POLICY AND  
CALLED FOR "A MAJOR REDUCTION IN REAL TERMS", "WITHDRAWAL  
FROM NATO", "ADOPTION OF SANE NON-ALIGNED DEFENSE  
POLICY", AND "DISPOSAL OF BRITAIN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS".  
SECOND, MORE MODERATE RESOLUTION EXPRESSED REGRET OVER  
CUTS IN SOCIAL SERVICES EXPENDITURES AND RISING DEFENSE  
BUDGET, AND CALLED "UPON GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT AN  
IMMEDIATE REDUCTION, WITH LONG TERM OBJECTIVE OF CUTTING  
DEFENSE EXPENDITURES IN REAL TERMS" TEXT OF BOTH  
RESOLUTIONS POUNCHED).

2. FLOOR DEBATE WAS DOMINATED BY LEFT WING, THOUGH ONE  
SPOKESMAN, ALAN WILLIAMS, MP, BRAVED STORM TO OPPOSE  
BOTH RESOLUTIONS. LEFTIST MP IAN MIKARDO SPOKE FOR NEC,  
ASKING THAT CONFERENCE REJECT FIRST RESOLUTION AND  
APPROVE SECOND. THIS POSITION, HE ARGUED, WAS CONSISTENT  
WITH PARTY MANIFESTO WHICH EXPLICITLY SUPPORTS NATO.  
MIKARDO THEN LAUNCHED ATTACK ON NATO AND FOLLOWED UP BY  
CHARGING THAT GOVERNMENT HAD DUPED HIM AND DELEGATES  
INTO SUPPORTING THE THEN TO BE COMPLETED DEFENSE REVIEW  
AT LAST YEAR'S CONFERENCE, AND URGED THAT DEFENSE BUDGET  
BE SLASHED TO 3 PERCENT OF GNP. HE ALSO TOLD CONFERENCE  
THAT NEC HAS APPOINTED SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
PROBLEM OF REDEPLOYING DEFENSE WORKERS WHO WOULD LOSE  
JOBS AS RESULT OF SPENDING CUTS AND ASSERTED THAT EARLY  
INFORMATION INDICATES THIS "WILL BE EASIER THAN MOST  
PEOPLE BELIEVE". THE VOTE, BY SHOW OF HANDS, OVER-  
WHELMINGLY SUPPORTED NEC ADVICE.

3. COMMENT. CONFERENCE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION CALLING  
FOR REDUCED DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WAS ANTICIPATED (REFTEL,  
NOTAL). RESOLUTIONS COMPOSING COMMITTEE, HOWEVER,  
DESERVES FULL CREDIT FOR INCORPORATING OPERATIVE  
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CLAUSES OF ALL SERIOUSLY OBJECTIONABLE RESOLUTIONS  
SUBMITTED BY CONSTITUENCY PARTIES INTO SINGLE COMPOSITE  
RESOLUTION, THEREBY ENSURING THAT BULK OF CONFERENCE  
WOULD REJECT EXTREME POSITION. AS INDICATED PREVIOUSLY,  
GOVERNMENT IS NOT BOUND BY RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY  
CONFERENCE AND WILL BE FREE TO IGNORE THIS ONE. HOWEVER,  
WE BELIEVE GOVERNMENT WILL BE FORCED TO CUT DEFENSE  
EXPENDITURES IF FURTHER LARGE SCALE CUTS IN SOCIAL SIDE

OF NATIONAL BUDGET BECOME NCESSARY BECAUSE OF ECONNOMIC  
SITUATION. NATURE AND MAGNITUDE OF SUCH REDUCTIONS, OF  
COURSE, WILL BE DETERMINED BY CIRCUMSTANCES AND RESULTS  
OF NATO CONSULTATIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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